

A DEAR LITTLE MAID OF TWO.

"I'll sing you a song to a nursery tune,
Of a dear little maid of two,
Who has peachen cheeks and rosebud lips,
And eyes of a soft sea blue;
With charms of a gleeful innocence,
That are ripe at the age of two.

"She is not an angel, no, no, no!
And Heaven be praised for that;
She is fairly human from top to toe,
With limbs that are daintily fat,
And where she trots, be it high or low,
There is wealth of surprising chat.

"Somebody's heart is strong and brave,
And somebody's love is true,
By day, by night, they are amply tried
By this little maid of two;
But somebody's love would never tire,
Had it ten times more to do.

"What reward does somebody get,
Dear dreamer with eyes of blue?
A kiss, a smile, from the roguish pet,
A tender caress or two.
Why, each of these is a Heaven of bliss,
From a sweet little maid like you.

"Come, happy maid, with the sea-bright eyes,
And prattle about my knee,
Then lay that soft sound cheek to mine,
And laugh in innocent glee;
That childish talk and downy touch
Give joy and strength to me.

"Then grow, my sweet, as well you may,
And be like somebody, true,
For high-born dames of noblest heart
Have been as tiny as you—
And in the maiden of twenty-one
May we find the maid of two!"

—Henry Johnston, in Good Words.

THE GILA MONSTER.

Facts Concerning This Mysterious and Dreadful Lizard.

It is a Sluggish Reptile But When Suddenly Attacked or Cornered Spits a Deadly Poison—Studying a Captive by Submitting it to Tests.

The Gila Monster (*Holodera horridum*), which lives in the valleys and sandy plains of Arizona and Sonora, is called by the native Mexicans *Escupiton*, which means "Spitter," derived from the Spanish verb *escupir*, to spit. It has at all times given rise to many seemingly improbable stories, and excited considerable curiosity; so it may not be amiss to take a closer look at the mysterious object in the light of recently developed facts, and an experience of many years spent in the regions of this animal's habitat. The lizard—for such it evidently is—varies in length from fifteen to thirty inches, and has a heavy rounded body, which touches the ground when the animal creeps along, unless enraged, when it assumes a more erect posture, moves quicker and begins to spit. Its coloring is like that of the rattlesnake, black figuring on yellow, the entire body being apparently scaly, though in reality the whole skin is composed of small particles, closely joined together, like an embroidery-work of beads. It is the only one of the lizard family that is extremely venomous.

Mr. Paul C. Brown, in a most interesting recent article, says that the long-debated question as to the venomous nature of the Gila Monster was brought up at a late meeting of the College of Physicians at Philadelphia. Drs. Mitchell and Reichart had on hand live, vigorous specimens of the lizard. Dr. Mitchell caused one to attack the edge of a dish, and some of the saliva was caught in a watch-glass. This was first tested. The venom of poisonous reptiles is acid, but this was alkaline. A minute quantity was then injected into a live pigeon, which died in less than nine minutes. Other experiments were tried which demonstrated the dangerous character of the poison. According to these learned doctors, "rattlesnake poison is a bagatelle in comparison."

The writer's personal experience with this saurian, which covers a period of over twenty-two years, may be condensed into the following facts. In 1867, while in the employ of the United States Quartermaster Department, I was stationed at Fort Wallen—since abandoned—in the Territory of Arizona, on the upper San Pedro river, and having considerable leisure time, I occupied myself frequently in collecting tarantulas, centipedes, snakes, campomochas, etc., and studying their habits. One day during the summer, our mail-rider from Tucson reported to me that he had met on his home-trip—in fact, that very morning—with a horrible animal, at sight of which his horse shied precipitately, almost unseating him. He quieted the horse, which, although trembling in every limb, came to a stand. Before the rider had time to pull his revolver and take aim, the strange animal disappeared among the rocks which line both sides of the road at that place. He described the animal as about four feet long, and not unlike a young caiman or crocodile (the rider was a native of Louisiana). We had at the fort several Mexicans, employed as brick-makers and herders; and upon their hearing his imperfect description, they came unanimously to the conclusion that he had seen an *escupiton*; only they shook their heads at the alleged size of the animal, all stating that they had never seen one exceeding a *vars* (thirty-three inches) in length.

In the evening I called these men to the office, and offered them five dollars for a live specimen, and half that amount for a dead one, not mutilated to any great extent. On the following Sunday two of them started out, and towards evening brought in a Gila Monster twenty-eight inches in length, which they had lassoed while it was asleep, or apparently so, on the sunny surface of a large rock, which allowed them to crawl up from behind unperceived and

to throw the nose over its head. They were carrying it between them, hanging from a Cereus pole, the ends of which rested on their shoulders, leaving between the dangling animal and its carriers a distance of at least six feet. Still they appeared to me to be uncomfortable, and as soon as I approached—in my ignorance and eagerness—somewhat close to the reptile, they both burst out with: "Por Dios, señor, cuidadol!" (For God's sake, sir, take care!)

There being an empty grain-room about the place, I lodged the saurian in it, attached to a raw-hide rope fastened to an iron picket pin, giving him about four feet play-room. This I did with the help of my two Mexican friends, armed with long blacksmith's tongs, while they continually cautioned me to look out for my fingers and keep out of reach of the animal's spittle. After paying the men, I sent for something from the sutler to compose their nerves, in order to ascertain from them the cause of their abject fear. Their stories mainly coincided with those of the other Mexicans and Indians whom I have interrogated upon the subject since, and though but hearsay evidence, I would state that these reports may be accepted as facts, the narrators being men of unquestionable veracity, and my later experiments bearing them out in their assertions.

A wood-cutter who had laid down in complete health to sleep, wrapped up in his blanket, failed to arise in the morning when his co-laborers called him. Upon uncovering him they found him stone dead, and near his body a Gila Monster, which, in the bustle and confusion of the moment, made good his escape. The body of the man bore no mark of a bite or other wound.

Near Magdalena, Sonora, a man was hunting rabbits with a dog. The latter inserted his snout into a rabbit hole but immediately retreated, uttering fearful howls while he was trying to shake off a Gila Monster which had fastened its teeth into the dog's nose, and although snarling and spitting without interruption could not be made to let go its hold till it was killed, and even then its jaws had to be forced apart with an iron rod. The dog, upon being released, began to act very strangely, and showed something like the same symptoms as a horse does when suffering from the "blind staggers," but soon began turning around itself in a circle with the head for its center, and in about twenty minutes fell down dead. The same actions before death were observed in a mule, only this animal was bitten in a hind-leg and lived for several days.

A young miner while prospecting was bitten just above the shoe. Although previously in the best health, he at once began to lose flesh, became melancholy, and died after a few months in the manner of those who succumb to what in Germany is called the galloping consumption.

If space allowed, I could enumerate many similar cases, more or less authenticated; but suffice it to say, that among the natives the universal belief is that the spittle or saliva, and even the mere breath and exhalation, of the animal in an excited state is deadly poison. I have been told by many Mexicans that the Yaqui Indians hunt the Gila Monster for the sake of its flesh, which is indeed appetizing enough to look at; but several Yaquis to whom I spoke about the matter have denied the assertion.

After this digression, let us return to my prisoner in the grain-room. The reader may imagine that, after the repeated cautions I had received from its captors, I personally gave the animal a wide berth, although I tried to induce a pointer, which we kept for hunting quail, to investigate the nature of the new-comer's temper. When the dog perceived the big lizard he stood perfectly still and trembled with fear, then turned about and fled. One of the men now brought a very brave and even vicious rat-terrier, who entered boldly enough and walked, sniffing cautiously, towards the Gila Monster, which, in its turn, came forward to the length of the rope. The two animals were now only a few feet apart; the dog began to whine and bark alternately, advancing a few inches and retreating again, showing plainly that he would like to go in and shake his adversary, who by this time had straightened his legs and was spitting furiously, shooting out his forked black tongue, while his little black eyes exhibited the "uncanny" fire of an angry snake. The dog could not be induced to go any nearer, and the fight was abandoned. The lizard was then given the corner of a woolen blanket; into this it bit furiously, holding on with such tenacity that we had to procure a crowbar to pry its jaws open. Cats placed in the same room—which had no door—with the saurian would, upon perceiving the animal, bristle up like the "fretful porcupine" and make a very speedy exit. I placed some chopped meat and a bowl of water within the reach of my captive and left him to himself. On the following morning he was gone, having dexterously slipped the noose over his head—at least there was no visible sign of gnawing on any part of the rope.

Since then I have experimented with many specimens; in fact, I buy a few every summer, either for that purpose or for stuffing. One I kept for over three months. It appeared to be quite old, and I used to place in its prison—a large dry-goods box—rats, mice, lizards and birds with clipped wings. It remained entirely inoffensive, but the animal thus introduced into the box would at once retire into the farthest

corner and remain there with evident signs of abject fear.

Finally I resolved to stuff it, and now became acquainted with a new feature of this animal's nature, a feature so extraordinary, so altogether incredible, that I almost hesitate to relate it, although I can produce several eye-witnesses to the performance. In order to preserve the skin without the least mutilation, I thought that the best way to kill the animal with the least possible suffering would be to drown it. I therefore attached a heavy stone to the wire which held the animal fast around the shoulders and immersed it in a barrel full of water, keeping the lizard completely under its surface, anchored, as it were. But when I found, after twelve hours of continuous immersion, that the saurian was as alive as ever, I then, with the help of another man, tried to strangle the animal, but did not succeed. At this stage a friend arrived at the house, and I related to him my perplexity; and he—a native of Sonora—killed the animal in a second by giving it a moderate short dry knock with the poker on the back part of the skull where the latter joins the backbone, telling me that the Gila Monster had a soft spot there, which I found to be the case while stuffing the animal.

In direct contrast with the last-mentioned peacefully-inclined specimen were several which I kept at different times. They would pounce upon anything that came in an aggressive manner near them; and I do not remember any small animal or bird that lived longer than from ten to thirty minutes after being bitten, with one exception. Small creatures, like mice and little pullets, would die almost immediately. A good-sized three-year-old rooster, however, which had a fight with him one day and was bitten in the leg, survived the battle for several years, although remaining lame. The lizard had one eye put out and was otherwise pretty badly used, so that I killed him in order to make a new experiment. I boiled him for about two hours in a well-cleaned kerosene can, and then gave a street cur about one pint of the liquid substance. He lapped it eagerly, as if it were beef-tea, appeared to enjoy it greatly, and manifestly looked about for more. Although I kept him locked up for several days in my courtyard, I failed to discover in him the least inconvenience resulting from the unaccustomed diet. This experiment I repeated at different times, whenever I received a specimen whose mutilated carcass did not admit of stuffing, and always with the same harmless result; so that I came to the conclusion that either the process of boiling or the gastric juice of the dog's stomach neutralized the venom.

But where is this deadly venom located? When I dissected the first *Holodera*, I found, to my great surprise, that notwithstanding the evident outer resemblance of its head to that of the rattlesnake, there were no fangs, no venomous bladders, no visible receptacle for venom; and furthermore, that whereas the jaws of venomous snakes are simply held in position by a number of elastic skins, which allow their throats to stretch to a great extent and thus enable them to swallow bodies of a much greater circumference than themselves, the jaws of the *Holodera* are well locked or hinged like those of the quadrupeds.

Although I have always been careful not to come in direct contact with a live Gila Monster, I have never taken any particular precautions for my hands while stuffing one and have handled its flesh freely. The animal has two rows—upper and lower—of very sharp teeth on each side, those of the upper jaw being considerably longer than the lower. The stomach is very small. Strange to say, the skin is thinnest on the back and along the spine is as thin as paper, while it becomes thicker towards the belly and is thickest around the tail. The little paws are exquisitely shaped and the forepaws resemble the thumb excepted—very much a human hand in form.

I have never yet seen a Gila Monster eat or drink, although I had several that became tame enough. What little they did eat or drink was made away with either at night or when nobody was present. I generally gave them chopped meat or earthworms; but am positive that quite frequently, especially after being recently captured, they would go without food or drink for a week or more. Its natural food I suppose to consist of small insects, bugs, worms and larvae; and as it has never been seen before April or after September, it is rational to conclude that it hibernates during the cool and cold seasons.—Chambers Journal.

Take a Rain Bath.

One of the best ways of refreshing the complexion is to expose it freely to the rain. A long walk, with the soft rain playing in one's face, is a thorough beautifier, which umbrellas have robbed us of long enough. Equipped in waterproof cloak and cap of storm serge, leaving the face quite bare, one should walk hours at least to get the full benefit of the rain. Not only the rain but the vapor-laden air soaks the tissues, washing the skin more thoroughly than a Turkish bath. Flitting out the shrunken skin, parched by house heat and obliterating fine wrinkles. Sleep and walking in the rain are two great aids to beauty which preserved the charms of Diana of Pottiers, who never allowed weather to keep her indoors, and who never lost an umbrella, because she never had one.—Leeds (Eng.) Mercury.

RECIPROCITY.

Secretary Blaine's Plan of Pan-American Free Trade.

WASHINGTON, April 22.—Since the announcement was made that there was a scheme on foot to negotiate treaties of reciprocity with the Central and South American States the matter has been very widely discussed and much has been written on the subject. It is now quite well known that the Secretary of State has been engaged for months in negotiating a treaty which will establish more reciprocal relations with Mexico and that he has also, within the past few weeks indicated to the Argentine Confederation that the Republic could have the same privileges of reciprocity as were proposed to Mexico. Should these regulations be consummated they will probably be communicated in the form of a treaty to the Senate before the tariff measure reaches that body. The terms of the treaties, so far as they are known, would obviate the necessity of placing a duty on hides, lead ores, and other Mexican or South American products.

The knowledge of pending negotiations has been communicated to some of the members of the Senate Committee on Foreign Relations, and intimations of the same character have been conveyed to some members of the Committee on Ways and Means, and also to certain Representatives from Massachusetts and other New England States. If this desired reciprocity can be accomplished and the trade between the Americas put on a secure footing, it is believed that it will go far toward satisfying the large interests that are now clamoring to have raw material from these countries placed on the free list.

The attitude of Secretary Blaine toward Mexico and the Argentine Republic is understood to apply to all Central and South American States if they desire to take advantage of it.

RUSK'S REMEDY.

The Secretary of Agriculture on the Farm Depression.

NEW YORK, April 22.—A special to the World from Washington says that Secretary Rusk is about to issue an address to the farmers of the country, explaining how the depression in agriculture can be remedied. He attributes the present state of affairs in part to carelessness in culture, and says that in the days of world-wide competition a successful farmer must be as well trained and careful in business as the storekeeper, and his equal in intelligence and general education.

The Secretary also thinks that the farmer does not study the market reports as carefully as he should, and recommends that he avail himself of the information supplied by the Agricultural Department. He thinks that farmers should not acquire more land than they can profitably cultivate. After touching upon the question of farm mortgages, transportation, the middle man, gambling in farm products and combinations to control the market, the Secretary makes a long argument in favor of higher duties on farm products. He gives tables to show that our imports of agricultural products amount to \$226,273,738, the greater part of which, probably \$250,000,000, might be, with proper encouragement, produced on our own soil. He thinks that the problem can be solved by the imposition of high rates of duty on agricultural products.

A FALLING BRIDGE.

Fatal Accident at a Colored Baptizing at Springfield, Ohio.

SPRINGFIELD, O., April 22.—At a colored baptizing given in Buck creek yesterday afternoon a part of a bridge crowded with spectators fell in. Four persons were injured fatally and over fifty more received injuries. There were about 600 people on Limestone street bridge, which had been condemned and afterward repaired, and which spans Mill race in addition to crossing the creek. This was about 100 feet long and five wide. There were about 200 persons standing there when Elder Green marched into the water to find a suitable immersion place. He was just going back to shore when a shout went up from the assembled crowd. The foot bridge had fallen, taking with it its human freight.

The injured were soon rescued. Those probably fatally hurt are: A Lehman, aged sixty-five; Mrs. Margaret Flannery, aged seventy; Mrs. Charles Meyers and son; all had bones broken and were injured internally.

Elder D. B. Green created some surprise by going on with the baptism. He paused for a time while the wounded were being carried away and then calmly proceeded to baptize every one of his nineteen converts, as if nothing had happened. He claimed that the souls of this band of nineteen could not be imperilled if the skies fell.

Captain Couch Dead.

OKLAHOMA, Ok., April 22.—Captain W. L. Couch died yesterday morning at three o'clock. His last words were: "Hurrah for Oklahoma."

The funeral occurs to-day, the birthday of Oklahoma. Hon. Sidney Clarke, of Lawrence, Kan., will deliver the address. Business will be entirely suspended and the citizens attend the funeral en masse.

Captain Couch leaves behind him a widow and five children, two girls and three boys. He died a poor man.

Captain Couch was shot in the knee over a disputed claim near this city April 4 last and died of blood poisoning as a result. J. C. Adams, who did the shooting, is in jail, but expresses no fear of not being acquitted.

WINDOM ON SILVER.

The Secretary of the Treasury Gives His Views on the Silver Question.

WASHINGTON, April 22.—Secretary Windom last night gave out the following, which is taken from a letter addressed by him to a Western correspondent in answer to comments and inquiries upon the present status of the silver question:

The bill recommended by the Treasury was framed mainly for two purposes: First, to meet the demand for an increase of circulation; and second, to enhance the value of silver by providing for it an additional and safe use as money. If approved by Congress it will, in my judgment, accomplish both of these objects and at the same time afford a fair and just basis for harmony of action on the silver question. To the silver interest it offers every substantial benefit that can be granted without peril to our financial system, and far greater advantages than can be found in free coinage. To those who demand "more money" it offers an annual increase of from \$33,000,000 to \$40,000,000. To those who insist upon a sound currency, it gives the amplest guarantee against the degradation of the American dollar. But to those who would inflate the currency by injecting a large volume of money without adequate safeguards against depreciation, it offers no comfort whatever. And right here is found the secret of much of opposition to some of its redemption features.

In reply to your friendly criticisms, let me invite your attention to the extraordinary concessions which are offered to the silver sentiment of the country.

First—It is proposed to absorb all the silver produced by the mines and reduction works of the United States, thereby withdrawing from the market nearly one half of the entire silver product of the world and thus greatly enhancing the value of the whole.

Second—Not content with this concession, which is surely without a parallel as to any other product, the Senate committee insists that the Government shall be compelled to purchase \$4,000,000 worth of silver in each month, making \$48,000,000 a year, which with the amount needed for the arts and for our trade with China, will exceed our own production by about \$10,000,000 per annum. How is this excess to be obtained? Only by purchase from abroad. In the event of an unfavorable balance of trade when our gold will be most needed at home we shall be compelled to export ten millions of gold, which we will then sorely need to pay for ten millions of silver which we will not need at all. This compulsory purchase of so great an amount will make the treasury the largest operator in the most gigantic "corner" ever organized.

Third—The bill reported by the House committee provides that the notes issued for silver bullion shall be redeemed in standard silver dollars if demanded by the holder. This will give to the owners of silver bullion the power to convert every ounce produced in this country into standard silver dollars at their own will and pleasure. True, there is not the slightest danger that this power will be exercised, because no sane man will prefer to convert treasury notes, which the Government is bound to redeem in gold or its equivalent, into standard silver dollars unless he may want a limited number of them for some specific purpose. Under this bill the Government will not force silver dollars into circulation, but it will permit any one to have coined as many of them as he can pay for with treasury notes. What more can the advocates of the silver coinage demand? Surely nothing, unless they desire to compel the treasury to force standard dollars into our circulation for the sole purpose of depressing and degrading it. Is it not enough that we take nearly one-half of the world's silver product and lock it up in order to increase the value of the other half; that we join the silver producers in the most gigantic "corner" ever organized, and that we give to the owners of silver bullion the right and the power to convert every ounce of our production into standard silver dollars if they choose to do so?

For all these unparalleled concessions to the silver interests, what is demanded in return? Only the privilege of protecting the honor and credit of the Nation by a grant of power to redeem its notes in either gold or its equivalent of silver bullion. All of the bills on this subject contemplate a policy to extend over an indefinite period, and which will result in the issue of a very large volume of treasury notes. If they be made redeemable in lawful money they must be paid in the best lawful money if demanded, in accordance with the high rule of honor which this Government has thus far maintained, and by which it has established a credit the pride and boast of our people. If the balance of trade shall turn against us or if distrust shall arise as to our ability to pay in gold—as it surely will—under such a provision of law, or if for any other reason, we shall be unable to redeem in gold when demanded, the Government will be compelled to discriminate against silver dollars, when gold will at once command a premium, and this Nation will step down from its present proud position and take its place on the financial basis of China, India and South America. It is to save us from this danger that I have insisted so strenuously for the provision to redeem in gold or its equivalent of silver bullion.

I know of but two ways by which the proposed issue of treasury notes can be anchored to the recognized values of the commercial world. One is the bullion redemption feature provided in the Treasury bill and the other is authority to sell bonds in order to provide a reserve fund to meet the constant increasing volume of proposed treasury notes. The latter I believe to be both unnecessary and unjustifiable. The former I believe to be entirely practicable and safe. Even with this safeguard against destruction to the fair fabric of our National credit the extraordinary concessions above mentioned approach as near to the dangerous edge of peril as one step further in that direction. I firmly believe that it would be far better to have no legislation on the subject.

SHOT FROM AMBUSH.

A Gang of Three Outlaw Brothers Wiped Out.

CATLETTSBURG, Ky., April 22.—Three brothers, John, Smith and William Baisden, desperadoes known throughout this section, were shot by a gang headed by Jim Brewer on Pigeon creek, eighty miles from here, Friday. The trouble which led to the killing dates back several years, when Brewer forced John Baisden from his bed and made him run for his life. Since then Baisden has been on a still hunt. Friday Brewer gathered a party of friends and waited for the outlaws in ambush. Firing was not begun until the three brothers were in close gunshot. John and Smith being killed outright and William frightfully wounded. He is not expected to survive, but was placed in jail at Logan Court House. For several years the Baisdens had been branded as outlaws and a reward of \$2,000 each set on their heads.